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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Tuesday, October 22, 1935

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, the Bureau of Plant Industry, and the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, U.S.D.A.

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When you and I had that talk awhile back -- that talk on food that furnish iron, I quoted the food people in the Bureau of Home Economics as saying that the very best sources of iron are 4 meat organs -- liver, kidneys, heart, and brains. Liver, kidneys, heart, and brains, the Big Four of the Blood Builders.

Well, this week came a letter from a lady who heard that talk and wants to serve brains now and then to her family. "But how in the world do you cook them?" she asks.

That's a good question and deserves a practical answer. Brains are an unusual kind of meat and need special preparation. They are perhaps the most delicate of all meat. And because they are so fragile, they need cooking first thing to make them firm before you use them in any of the various good dishes I know of.

Like other delicate meats they spoil easily, so, if possible, cook them the day you buy them. Then, when you bring them home, wash them and drop them in a small amount of lightly salted water to soak half an hour. Then set on the stove and simmer until they are white and firm. This usually takes 15 or 20 minutes. Let them cool in the water they cooked in. Then, remove the membranes and they are ready to cook in any one of half a dozen ways.

For example, a favorite breakfast dish is eggs and brains, scrambled together. For this dish, you cook the brains in small pieces, stir them into the eggs, and scramble the mixture.

For lunch or dinner, you might serve brains fried, broiled, creamed, or cold in salad. To fry, first dip the brains in beaten egg, then in crumbs. Brown on all sides in the frying pan.

Brains will probably go farthest if you cream them and serve them on toast or in patty shells. Cut them in small pieces. Make a sauce, using part milk and part the liquor in which they cooked with flour for thickening and butter, salt and pepper for seasoning.

Still another way to fix them is to broil them. Place them in a shallow pan, pour melted butter over them, sprinkle with salt, and set under the gas flame until they are golden brown. Baste occasionally with melted butter and a little of the stock. Turn and brown on the other side. Serve with a sauce made from the drippings in the pan, flour and either milk or stock.

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There you have 4 good ways to serve brains to your family -- scrambled with eggs; dipped in crumbs and fried; creamed and broiled. Then, as I mentioned before, you can serve them cold and diced in salad as you do cold chicken. But the first step in any of these dishes is to simmer the brains in salted water to "set" them and whiten them.

Second question. A man who writes that sauerkraut is among his favorite dishes wants to know about a rumor he's been hearing. He says: "Is it true you can make good sauerkraut out of turnips?"

The answer to that is, "Yes, indeed." Chemists at the Department of Agriculture developed this new kind of sauerkraut a few years ago and it is already popular, though it will probably never take the place of the better known cabbage sauerkraut. The turnips to use for kraut are those of the Purple Top variety and they should be in perfect condition. You shred or grind them and mix them with salt -- 4 ounces of salt for every 10 pounds of turnips. Pack the mixture in stone jars. Press down and sprinkle salt generously over the top. Put on a wood or stone cover and weight it down. In 24 hours enough juice should come out to cover the top. Fermentation will be complete in 15 to 20 days, if you keep the jar at room temperature. When the kraut has fermented, pack it in glass jars and store it in a cold place.

So much for sauerkraut. Now a question about marmalade.

When you have poured paraffin over the top of a jar of marmalade, have you ever had trouble with the paraffin leaking way down into the marmalade? Well, a lady recently reported just this trouble to the Bureau of Home Economics. The canning people at the Bureau give 3 possible causes for it. First, maybe you used a recipe that made the marmalade too thin. If the mixture was thin and watery, the warm paraffin might run down into it. Second, maybe the marmalade and the paraffin were both too hot. In this case, they might mix in together as they wouldn't later when the marmalade had cooled. Third, maybe you poured paraffin in with too much force. In that case, it might penetrate the marmalade.

Last question. (This is one left-over from last week's grist.) A listener wrote last week to ask where the apple which goes by the name of "pippin" got that odd name. I can't say for sure, but probably the apples first named pippins were those from trees raised from pips or seeds. Pippins are apples with a history. The French introduced them into Great Britain sometime during the 16th Century. In Shakespeare's time they were great delicacies, much prized as a dessert fruit. You remember that one of Shakespeare's characters says: "I will make an end to my dinner -- there's pippins and cheese to come." Of course, you know we have many kind of pippins today. Favorites are the Ribston Pippin and the Newtown Pippin and the Golden Pippin.

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